

AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT:

Please further amend the Abstract as follows:

A game machine includes a CPU and, when a game cartridge is loaded in the game machine, the CPU is electrically connected to a ROM in the game cartridge and a non-volatile flash memory having at least two game data storage backup areas. Game data generated during the progress of a game is ~~stored (renewed)~~ maintained in a volatile work memory and, in response to an instruction provided by a user, "last game" data is saved in an appropriate non-volatile flash memory backup storage area. When the user instructs the game machine to save the last game data, the CPU selects as a game data storage backup area that is stored with game data having an ~~older~~ oldest writing time. ~~Writing of this last game data to the selected back-up area is prohibited if two or more writable backup areas are determined not to be present in the non-volatile memory. In addition, if~~ If writing to the selected backup area can not be performed ~~at that time~~, for example, due to a memory element defect or abrupt failure, and only a single remaining backup storage area is available, a writing of ~~the~~ this last game data over the game data written immediately beforehand is prevented (i.e., prohibited), so as to always leave intact the last previously saved game data that was generated during the preceding game play session. In addition, if the flash memory is provided with more than two game data storage backup areas, writing of this last game data to the selected backup area is prohibited if there are not at least two writable (i.e., non-defective) backup areas present in the non-volatile memory.